

Message Text

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16

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 FEA-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 INT-05 OES-05 IO-10 SAM-01

SAB-01 /104 W

----- 117360

R 261550Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8164

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

UNCLAS CARACAS 3337

DEPT PASS ALL OPEC CAPITALS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR ENRG SA VE OPEC

SUBJECT: GOV BELIEVES FAISAL'S DEATH WILL NOT AFFECT OPEC

1. IN COMMENTS ON DEATH OF KING FAISAL REPORTED IN LOCAL PRESS MARCH 26, VENEZUELAN FOREIGN MINISTER RAMON ESCOVAR SALOM SAID FAISAL "WAS A MAN OF GREAT IMPORTANCE". ESCOVAR FURTHER STATED HE DID NOT BELIEVE FAISAL'S DEATH WOULD RESULT IN CHANGES IN OPEC POLICIES." "WE CONSIDER OPEC TO BE A PERMANENT ORGANIZATION, AND ALTHOUGH KING FAISAL'S CONTRIBUTION TO OPEC HAS BEEN VERY IMPORTANT," ESCOVAR SAID, "WE BELIEVE HIS DEATH WILL NOT NEGATIVELY INFLUENCE OPEC."

2. MINES AND HYDROCARBONS MINISTER VALENTIN HERNANDEZ ACOSTA TOLD REPORTERS FAISAL'S DEATH HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN GOV CABINET MEETING MARCH 25. HERNANDEZ SAID HE PERSONALLY REGRETTED FAISAL'S DEATH "BECAUSE I KNEW HIM AND HE WAS, WITHOUT DOUBT, A MAN OF GREAT IMPORTANCE IN THE ARAB WORLD." HERNANDEZ SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE FAISAL'S DEATH WOULD AFFECT THE FUNCTIONING OF OPEC "BECAUSE GENERALLY OPEC POLICIES ARE DETERMINED BY ALL UNCLASSIFIED

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OF ITS MEMBERS. MOREOVER, THE TRANSFER OF POWER APPARENTLY

HAS BEEN NORMAL."

3. COMMENT: FAISAL'S DEATH WAS GIVEN HEAVY COVERAGE ON VENEZUELAN NEWSCASTS MARCH 25 AND IS FEATURED ON FRONT PAGES OF ALL MORNING DAILIES MARCH 26. THE GOV'S SHOCK OVER THE ARABIAN MONARCH'S DEATH IS INCREASED BY THE FACT THAT FAISAL WAS SCHEDULED TO MAKE A STATE VISIT TO VENEZUELA IN MAY OR JUNE THIS YEAR.
ASENCIO

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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